

DATE: December 12, 2010

TO: Mark Stultz for distribution to the CBPO Stakeholders

FROM: Joe Coleman, President, Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy

SUBJECT: Commonwealth of Virginia Watershed Implementation Plan Proposals

Over the past two weeks I have come to the conclusion that Ms. Mann must be quoting from a different copy of the *Commonwealth of Virginia Phase I Watershed Implementation Plan* (WIP) than the one distributed to all the stakeholders November 30.

For example, Ms Mann states in her December 11 email that septic system pump outs should occur every "15 years, as proposed by the State in the Watershed Implementation Plan ..." What the Plan **actually** states (page 6) is "Seek legislative changes necessary to establish 5 year pumpout requirements for septic tanks in jurisdictions within Virginia's Chesapeake Bay watershed ..." Again, on page 104, in the section beginning "In summary, this plan proposes for the Online/Septic Sector:" there is a bullet which states "Seek legislative changes to establish 5 year pumpout requirements for septic tanks in jurisdictions within Virginia's Chesapeake Bay Watershed (this mirrors the existing requirement for septic tanks within Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act areas)".

Ms. Mann has stated on numerous occasions that the only action required in the agricultural section of the WIP is the development of nutrient management plans. In actuality a number of components are proposed (see page 59) to accomplish load targets of which nutrient management plans are only one; "35 foot *minimum*" [italics mine] buffers are another. And on page 62 in the second bullet it states "To achieve 95 percent implementation of 35' forest or grass buffers on crop and hay lands it will be necessary to pursue an expectation for buffers." The section on agricultural properties does indicate that all the suggested actions will be voluntary "until such time as agricultural load targets are not achieved for a particular milestone period."

Ms. Mann also stated in an email dated December 2 that "we can exempt all of the land east of 15 if we wish to do so." The WIP does not say any such thing and in fact, in a section beginning on page 88, includes a long list of actions which will be needed to mitigate the negative impacts of development including a "Reduction of impervious cover on a programmatic level ...." On page 92 there is a table that calls for a 7.5% reduction in impervious cover and further reduction by implementing filtration and infiltration practices by 7.5% and 8% respectively. Interestingly enough, according to the Center for Watershed Protection, an average buffer width of 100 feet reduces imperviousness by 5%.

The WIP also states that if the initial goals are not met the implementation of "additional BMPs will be necessary to meet the allocated pollution reductions ..." and that "will be costly, necessitating state and local funding through stormwater utilities, service districts or other mechanisms." **While the establishment of 100 foot buffers will place a burden on some of the county's citizens now, it will cost all of us considerably less today than if we wait.**

We have a choice. We can choose to *ignore* the many and extensive scientific studies that have been done that demonstrate the importance and value of buffers and not only watch our water quality deteriorate but pay a lot more to fix it in the years to come or, we can act now and recommend that our Supervisors implement 100 foot buffers which will enable Loudoun to meet restoration requirements.